

P23954.A02

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An outer sheathed endoscope comprising:
a flexible insertion portion ~~including~~ having a guide channel formed therethrough;
~~an a detachable~~ outer sheath ~~for detachably~~ covering the flexible insertion portion;
a channel tube, a tip end of ~~which is~~ the channel tube being fixed to a tip end of the outer sheath and ~~which is passed~~ passing through the outer sheath, wherein ~~in a state that~~ when the outer sheath covers the flexible insertion portion, the channel tube ~~is passed~~ extends through the guide channel;
a locking mechanism for restricting the flexible insertion portion from ~~escaping~~ detaching from the ~~flexible insertion portion~~ outer sheath; and
a channel deformation space ~~for allowing~~ that permits a part in the vicinity of a tip end part of the channel tube to be elastically deformed when a tip end part of the outer sheath is rotated about an axis in a predetermined range in a circumferential direction with respect to the tip end part of the flexible insertion portion,
wherein the locking mechanism is disengaged by rotating the tip end part of the outer sheath about the axis in the predetermined range with respect to the tip end part of the flexible insertion portion,
wherein the locking mechanism includes a hook portion and a groove portion,

P23954.A02

the groove portion being engageable with the hook portion in the circumferential direction, and

wherein the hook portion is disengaged from the groove portion when the tip end part of the outer sheath is rotated with respect to the tip end part of the flexible insertion portion.

2. (currently amended) The outer sheathed endoscope according to claim 1, wherein

~~in a state where~~ when the outer sheath covers the flexible insertion portion and no load is applied to the outer sheath, ~~a state where~~ the locking mechanism is engaged ~~is maintained~~ by elasticity of the channel tube, and

the engagement of the locking mechanism is ~~canceled~~ removed to enable the tip end part of the flexible insertion portion to ~~escape~~ detach from the tip end part of the outer sheath when the tip end part of the outer sheath is rotated about the axis in the predetermined range with respect to the tip end part of the flexible insertion portion by elastically deforming the channel tube in the channel deformation space.

3. (currently amended) The outer sheathed endoscope according to claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism includes an L-shaped groove portion ~~which~~ that is ~~formed~~ provided in an outer face of the tip end part of the flexible insertion portion and a hook portion ~~which~~ that is ~~formed~~ provided on an inner face of the tip end part of the outer sheath to be engageable with the groove portion.